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**Economic and Social Council**
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General segment

**Provisional summary record of the 37th meeting**
Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, on Thursday, 18 July 2013, at 10 a.m.

*President*: Mr. Sajdik

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*In the absence of Mr. Osorio (Colombia), Mr. Sajdik (Austria), Vice-President, took the Chair.*

*The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.*

**The President**, opening the general segment, said that the panel discussion to be held at the current meeting would give the Council an opportunity to hear from members of the Committee for Development Policy and use their insights to enrich discussions at the next substantive session.

*Panel discussion: The road to development in the post-2015 era: addressing emerging global challenges*

**Mr. Ocampo** (Chair of the Committee for Development Policy) said that the Millennium Development Goals had been a milestone in global and national development efforts. The system for monitoring progress with the Goals was exemplary. However, the strong focus on social development issues had in some cases taken attention away from other Goals, such as those on employment generation and sustainable development.

The United Nations System Task Team on the Post-2015 United Nations Development Agenda and the High-level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda had produced reports that revealed the existence of an emerging consensus around the major elements to be included in the post-2015 agenda. There was broad agreement that the agenda should be both universal and adaptable to different regional and country-specific circumstances. Experts agreed that sustainable economic, social and environmental development must be at the heart of the agenda. There was a need for a strong global partnership, which had been the weakest aspect of the Millennium Development Goal framework. A comprehensive vision for the post-2015 agenda had been formulated and proposals had been made on the objectives of the agenda: achieving sustainable development; promoting job creation and inclusive growth; fostering peace and effective, open and accountable institutions; and forging a new global partnership. The proposals provided valuable input for discussions on how to shape the post-2015 era.

The High-level Panel of Eminent Persons had not dealt with the subject of growing inequality across and within countries. The reduction of inequalities should be made a specific target in the post-2015 agenda. National development strategies should focus on stability and economic growth policies, domestic resource mobilization, sectoral policies, especially in regard to innovative technologies, equitable growth objectives and environmental sustainability.

The establishment of a global partnership for development should facilitate the management of issues such as ecosystem preservation and macroeconomic instability. It would also make it easier to secure international agreement on social and environmental standards and to reduce inequalities. When developing plans to shape the post-2015 era, the international community must take account of trends such as the emergence of a multipolar world and the increasing heterogeneity of developing countries, both of which illustrated the importance of the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities.

**Mr. Klasen** (Member of the Committee for Development Policy) commended the High-level Panel on formulating a universal vision for the world in 2030. He said that he welcomed the emphasis that the Panel had placed on the need for a universal agenda co-owned by all countries, the notion of global goals and national targets and the call for a data revolution. However, the multitude of proposed goals and targets could pose problems for implementation. There was a lack of prioritization and many goals and targets were impossible to quantify. Some of the goals were ambitious, if not unrealistic. The complete elimination of poverty or hunger, for example, would require a sea change in the countries

concerned and in the international system, and little insight had been provided into ways to implement the post-2015 agenda.

Global governance needed to be improved in critical areas such as trade, climate change, economic cooperation, the effectiveness of the United Nations system and global leadership. Global governance improvements were also needed in areas such as the delivery of essential public goods, macroeconomic stability, knowledge-sharing, climate change mitigation, social and labour standards and international migration. A functioning system of global governance was needed to implement the post-2015 agenda and eliminate poverty, in particular.

There was a danger that the special needs of least developed countries might be overlooked in the quest for a more universal development agenda post 2015. Issues that affected small island developing States, and the adoption of special financial support measures for least developed countries must remain a priority. The best way forward would be to reduce the number of goals and targets and to include measures to deal with issues related to global governance, economic imbalances, financial instability, tax evasion, environmental and social standards, and the provision of public goods, especially in least developed countries.

**Mr. Bairagi** (Nepal) said that the international community should not focus solely on economic development and should preserve the gains scored in the area of social development. He asked what could be done to accelerate progress on Millennium Development Goal 8 and to reverse the trend towards growing inequality. He said that he took issue with the affirmation that the goal of eradicating extreme poverty and hunger had been too ambitious. Perhaps the international community needed to rethink its approach to the least developed countries.

**Mr. Berdyev** (Russian Federation) said that it was imperative to counter inequality between and within countries. No effort should be spared to achieve all the Millennium Development Goals, and the eradication of poverty remained a priority. The goals of boosting national industrial capacity and employment, developing infrastructure, and improving access to health care and education must be among the primary objectives of the post-2015 agenda. The Council's vital role in coordinating the work of international agencies helped to prevent fragmentation and to promote scientific and technical cooperation and investment. The reduction of macroeconomic uncertainty would be achieved through improvements in government debt positions, international trade flows and credit policies. Extraneous peace and security should not be included in the socioeconomic agenda.

**Ms. Luna** (Mexico) said that the goals of combating inequality and dealing with international migration must figure prominently in the post-2015 agenda. She would like to know the panellists' views on how to formulate ambitious but realistic goals with measurable outcomes.

**Mr. Díaz Arrivillaga** (Observer for Honduras) said that lack of governance was the weak spot in the global economic system. The economic agenda was driven largely by the priorities of the developed world and little room was left for achieving meaningful progress on such vital development issues as protectionism, agricultural exports and migration.

**Ms. Kage** (Observer for Germany) said that more comprehensive indicators than statistics on income were needed to measure poverty. She asked whether the international community should devise new working methods to deal with the three pillars of sustainable development.

**Ms. Robl** (United States of America) said that work on the Millennium Development Goals should be completed and the problem of poverty tackled in the

framework of economic growth and environmental sustainability. The international community should give priority to aspects of development that included gender equality, access to health care, food security, assistance to vulnerable groups, accountability, improved data collection, and the recognition that peace and security were critical for development. It must establish a single set of ambitious, measurable and global goals. Each State should contribute to solving global problems while improving its own situation. She asked how policies on poverty eradication could be dovetailed with action to deal with inequality.

**Mr. Nasr** (Egypt) asked how the failure to implement Millennium Development Goal 8 could be explained and in what way goal 12, as defined in the report of the High-level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda, differed from it. He wished to know whether the least developed and middle-income countries should be expected to fund activities to meet the goals set in the post-2015 agenda or whether targets should be set for transferring technology and providing financial aid to those countries.

**Ms. González Zambrano** (Observer for the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) expressed concern that the United Nations was working on three processes at once: assessing the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals; following up the Rio+20 Conference outcome; and defining objectives for the post-2015 agenda. Mistakes made in the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals should be examined first. The international community should include objectives relating to human rights, the right to development, equality, the eradication of poverty and environmental sustainability in the post-2015 agenda. The agenda should be universal and flexible enough to take into account specific regional and national needs. Moreover, official development assistance should be stepped up, the Doha Round should be brought to a successful conclusion and technology transfers should be put at the centre of development concerns. Nothing could be achieved without order being brought to the international financial system. Although private sector and civil society involvement in the post-2015 agenda would be welcome, the State would play the central role in development policy.

**Mr. Ponder** (International Telecommunication Union (ITU)) said that, through its review process, the World Summit on the Information Society was attempting to highlight the potential of information and communications technologies for fostering inclusive development.

**Mr. Van Schalkwyk** (South Africa) said that the principle of differentiated responsibilities should not be overlooked in the pursuit of common, universal development goals. It was equally important to continue work on the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals right up until 2015.

**Mr. Aldo Salone** (Brazil) said that the eradication of extreme poverty was a modest objective and that the indicator of less than US$ 1.25 per day should be updated to reflect current conditions. Official development assistance was crucial to combating the scourge of poverty. The international community should not shy away from its commitment to Millennium Development Goal 8. The post-2015 agenda would be complex and fulfilling it would require more varied sources of funding, including private sector sources. Agreement should be sought on what constituted sustainable levels of production and consumption. The need to deal with inequalities and to transfer technology should not be ignored.

**Ms. Houngbedji** (Benin) said that the report of the High-level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda should be more widely disseminated before negotiations on the basis of its content took place. It could be inferred from suggestions that the aim of eradicating poverty was overly ambitious that some people should simply be abandoned to their fate. The focus in the post-2015 phase should be on helping the least developed countries. Much could be done in 10 years to help those countries to graduate

from the LDC category, an achievement that would give the international community something to be proud of. In that context, a review of global governance processes was critical.

**Mr. Getahun** (Ethiopia) asked how a global partnership could help to transform the least developed countries and boost the economies of other developing countries. The assertion that the Millennium Development Goals had been too ambitious missed the point. They had provided targets to aim for, and Governments needed clear and measurable targets.

**Mr. Klasen** (Committee for Development Policy), replying to questions from the participants, said that the top priority should be to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. He agreed that the eradication of poverty was desirable, but the international community needed to set realistic targets. The goal of eradicating poverty in only 15 years was unprecedented and fulfilling it called for equally unprecedented strategies. Even China had still not wholly met that goal after 30 years. To help define realistic goals and speed up progress, a study should be conducted of how successful developing countries had improved their performance on poverty and other indicators.

Neither the Millennium Development Goals nor the Sustainable Development Goals were intended to provide a blueprint for intervention solely on social development issues. A more comprehensive development strategy was needed. The definition of well-being should be broadened to include such aspects as health, education and empowerment. There was a dearth of comparable data on which to base the design of development targets. Goal 12, as proposed in the report of the High-level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda, was no better defined than Millennium Development Goal 8.

**Mr. Ocampo** (Chairperson of the Committee for Development Policy) said that the Millennium Development Goals, the Sustainable Development Goals and the post-2015 development agenda must complement each other. Failure to use the initial set of goals as a stepping stone towards the next generation of goals would be tantamount to suicide for the United Nations development system. The report of the High-level Panel did not explore the issue of inequality in sufficient depth, or the fact that some regions with historically highly levels of inequality were improving while others were regressing. Given the link between poverty and inequality, States needed to take comprehensive measures to tackle both issues at once. Contributors to the Human Development Report were working on a multidimensional poverty indicator that included equality. The post-2015 development agenda should concentrate on economic development, the green economy and issues such as the interdependence of countries.

**Non-governmental organizations** (E/2013/32 (Parts I and II/Corr.1))

**The President** drew attention to the draft decisions contained in the reports of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations on its 2013 sessions (E/2013/32 (Parts I II/Corr.1)).

*Report of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations on its 2013 regular session (E/2013/32 (Part I))*

*Draft decision I: "Applications for consultative status and requests for reclassification received from non-governmental organizations"*

*Draft decision I was adopted.*

*Draft decision II: "Requests for withdrawal of consultative status"*

*Draft decision II was adopted.*

*Draft decision III: "Report of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations on its 2013 regular session"*

*Draft decision III was adopted.*

*Report of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations on its 2013 resumed session (E/2013/32 (Part II) and (Part II)/Corr.1)*

*Draft decision I: "Applications for consultative status, requests for reclassification and quadrennial reports received from non-governmental organizations"*

*Draft decision I was adopted.*

*Draft decision II: "Suspension of consultative status of non-governmental organizations with outstanding quadrennial reports, pursuant to Council resolution 2008/4"*

*Draft decision II was adopted.*

*Draft decision III: "Reinstatement of consultative status of non-governmental organizations that submitted outstanding quadrennial reports, pursuant to Council resolution 2008/4"*

*Draft decision III was adopted with minor drafting changes.*

*Draft decision IV: "Withdrawal of consultative status of non-governmental organizations in accordance with Council resolution 2008/4"*

*Draft decision IV was adopted with minor drafting changes.*

*Draft decision V: "Dates of and provisional agenda for the 2014 session of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations"*

*Draft decision V was adopted.*

*Draft decision VI: "Report of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations in its 2013 resumed session"*

*Draft decision VI was adopted.*

**Mr. Butt** (Pakistan) said that the Council had not just approved the consultative status of the largest ever number of NGOs, it had adopted a more cooperative approach to its dealings with NGOs. The Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations did not have the resources to meet demand. The number of applications for consultative status had nearly tripled between 2009 and 2013, and the Council should give the Committee the means to deal with the increasing workload by either allocating it more meeting time or setting a realistic limit on the number of applications to be considered each session. The NGO Branch could review the applications based on the criteria set out in Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

**Mr. Zeran** (Observer for Chile), also speaking on behalf of Mexico and Uruguay, said that he recognized the valuable contribution of NGOs operating in the national and multilateral arenas, especially those advocating for vulnerable groups, human rights defenders, sustainable development, and environmental protection. The Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations should recognize the diversity of NGOs and conduct its work in a transparent manner. In that connection, long wait times and excessive demands posed a particular problem for NGOs from developing countries, which were not in a position to comply with burdensome evaluation procedures. Moreover, screeners should not penalize NGOs for the views that they held.

**Ms. González Zambrano** (Observer for the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) said that compliance with Council resolution 1996/31, especially the provision giving Member States the right to ask questions of NGOs applying for consultative status, must be ensured. Lack of time was not a justification for sidestepping the Council's guiding principles.

**Mr. Aldo Salone** (Brazil) pointed out that four well-established Brazilian NGOs, including one whose president sat on the board of the United Nations Global Compact, had seen their applications deferred. He asked what specific issues were holding up the process.

**Mr. Rybakon** (Russian Federation) called for more resources to be allocated to the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations. He said that the criteria for deciding on NGO applications, such as their sources of funding and political independence, should not be disregarded.

**Ms. Kokkinakis** (Observer for the European Union) applauded the Committee's historic decision to recommend that special consultative status be given to two organizations that promoted the rights of lesbians, gays, bisexuals and transgender persons. She expressed concern that the Committee continued to defer applications, primarily from NGOs working on sexual and reproductive rights, women's rights, and freedom of expression. She urged the Committee to abide by its core mandate when making determinations on the status of NGOs.

*The meeting rose at 12.40 p.m.*